



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2020

No. 144

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, August 14, 2020, at 2 p.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2020

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ROY BLUNT, a Senator from the State of Missouri.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our refuge and strength, give us reverence for Your greatness. Guide our Senators around the pitfalls of their work, enabling them to have hearts sustained by Your peace. May they surrender their will to You as they trust You to guide their lives.

Lord, give them the wisdom to receive Your reproof, with the understanding that You chastise those whom You love for their good. Make their lives productive for the glory of Your Name.

Mighty God, protect the oppressed and helpless, preserving them from evil.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, August 12, 2020.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ROY BLUNT, a Senator from the State of Missouri, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BLUNT thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, I spoke about the disconnect between the discourse here in Washington and the pain and uncertainty that American families are feeling all across our country.

I spoke about the human toll of the Democrats' choice to play politics with billions and billions of aid and block it all over non-COVID-related wish list items.

It has been clear for some weeks that the Speaker of the House and the Senate Democratic leader are treating this crisis like an ordinary political game.

The New York Times says Speaker PELOSI is "playing hardball." POLIT-

ICO says she is "taking a huge risk . . . as she remains almost entirely unyielding in her demands."

More than 160,000 Americans have been killed by the worst infectious disease outbreak in more than a century. More than 16 million Americans are out of work. An entire school year for our kids is in limbo, but Democrats are playing political games like this were some run-of-the-mill typical negotiation.

Speaker PELOSI's own Democratic House Members call her proposal "Washington gamesmanship," "partisan gamesmanship," and "playing politics." Those are House Democrats I am quoting on the House Democratic bill.

Yesterday, literally a few minutes after I said on the floor that Democrats should stop treating this crisis like a game, the Democratic leader came to the floor to talk about who "ran down the clock," who "tossed up an air ball," and who "subbed themselves out of the game."

So, look, the Democrats aren't taking this as a serious issue. They aren't acting like this is serious, and the American people are hurting in the meantime.

Let's get outside the beltway and listen to how this crisis has impacted real American families and how the Democrats' stonewalling continues to hurt them.

Since we passed the CARES Act, I have been visiting healthcare facilities in my home State of Kentucky—places like St. Claire's Healthcare in Morehead and King's Daughters Medical

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Center in Ashland—always wearing a mask and social distancing, of course.

I have thanked the frontline workers and heard how the Senate's last rescue package has helped them save lives and stay safer themselves while doing it. That is because the CARES Act provided \$1.3 billion for Kentucky healthcare providers alone, on top of more than \$120 million we had already sent for testing.

But Kentucky's incredible nurses, doctors, and hospitals are not finished fighting the battle on behalf of their communities, and Congress must not be finished helping them do it. That is why Senate Republicans proposed major new investments in health providers.

We want to send tens of billions more to expand testing, to reimburse healthcare facilities for unplanned pandemic expenses, to speed the development and rapid distribution of COVID-19 treatments, and to find a vaccine to finish this fight once and for all.

That is what Republicans would like to do, but Democrats have about blocked all of it over non-COVID-related, liberal demands.

Let's talk about the PPP—the historic program from Chairman COLLINS and Chairman RUBIO that has kept Main Street alive and kept millions of Americans from losing their jobs.

This program has been transformational for Kentucky. Our small businesses and their workers have received more than \$5 billion of payroll support. As the director of the Dare to Care Food Bank in Louisville told me recently, PPP funding is what has allowed his facility to keep its entire workforce—precisely when our community needs were the greatest.

And I heard from the director of a Kentucky museum that “[t]he PPP program was the one hope that we had to keep our business alive.”

But these small businesses and non-profits are now nearing the end of that help. The PPP had to close its doors last Saturday for new applications, and many employers are exhausting the money they had already received. Our country is approaching another small business tipping point, and workers could begin getting pink slips instead of paychecks.

That is why Senate Republicans wrote up plans for another whole round of PPP—a full second draw for the hardest hit businesses. House Democrats left this out of their bill entirely and essentially turned their backs on those benefiting from PPP. But Republicans want to keep helping Main Street workers.

One woman-owned small business in Northern Kentucky shared:

We are grateful for the \$465,000 in the PPP. [But] we have used all of it for payroll and employee related costs . . . 18 weeks of expenses. We are seeking [more] financial help to keep our most treasured asset, our people, employed.

And the president of an inspection company in Louisville says this:

You have no idea how much this second draw on PPP will help us. We were actually in the process of figuring out how we were going to make it through to our fall work season. . . . If we get this, we could make it into our season with no layoffs.

Republicans want to get more aid to these workers, but Senate Democrats have blocked every bit of it over non-COVID-related liberal demands.

Let's talk about our university presidents who are worried about testing and funding in the fall. Our K-12 school boards and superintendents want legal protections so they can reopen.

So Republicans proposed billions for education—actually, even more than House Democrats in their bill. But now Democrats are blocking it all over unrelated, liberal demands.

Republicans want another round of direct checks—direct checks to households across Kentucky and across America.

I just heard from one constituent who said:

With my first one, I was able to get an eye exam and new glasses. . . . I appreciate all you can do. Some of us are hurting and need help.

I want to put more cash in her pocket right now, but Democrats are blocking every penny over unrelated, liberal demands.

So do you see the pattern? Kentuckians need more help; Americans need more help. The American people are not done fighting this virus, and Republicans are not done crafting policies to help them. But the difference between now and March is that Democrats seem to be finished being reasonable.

The Speaker of the House and the Senate Democratic leader have cut all their colleagues—all of them, all of their committees—out of negotiations. They are doing this alone, and they have declared that none of the priorities I have named will see a single dime unless—the two of them have declared none of the priorities I have named will see a single dime unless millionaires in Brooklyn and San Francisco get a massive tax cut, States get a trillion-dollar slush fund to cover budget problems long before the pandemic, and we tax essential workers to pay unemployed people a higher salary to stay home.

Republicans wanted to reach agreement on all these issues where we could find common ground and fight over the last few issues later. But the Speaker and the Democratic leader say nothing can move unless every one of these unrelated, far-left items tags along.

These two individuals are letting the wish lists of wealthy coastal elites stand between every working family in America and the additional help they deserve.

So maybe in a few moments the Democratic leader or somebody on the other side will try again to explain how this is all some big political game.

Well, Kentuckians know differently. They need results. All of our States

need results. And Republicans will fight until we actually get an outcome.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Virginia.

VICE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the latest coronavirus emergency aid package, but before I do, as a matter of personal privilege, I want to offer some comments in praise of a colleague.

Just as we gather together, regardless of party, to mourn when a colleague dies or be together with a colleague who is undergoing a challenge, I think it is good to gather together and acknowledge when something positive happens to a colleague, regardless of our political affiliation.

This is the first opportunity on the Senate floor to offer a word about Senator KAMALA HARRIS, one of our colleagues, who, in a historic move, was asked by another former Senate colleague, Vice President Joe Biden, to join him as his preferred nominee to be Vice President of the United States.

I have come to know Senator HARRIS in her 4 years in the Senate, as many of us have, through her service on especially the Judiciary Committee and the Intelligence Committee.

Her public service track record is a significant one worthy of praise, from her work as a district attorney, first a line prosecutor, and then the elected district attorney in San Francisco, where she focused on trying to keep her community safe, to serving as California's attorney general, broadening the portfolio to include environmental justice and consumer protection, and now her work in the Senate since 2016.

What I find so compelling about Senator HARRIS, in addition to her track record of public service during a very long career, is her personal story. Raised as the child of two immigrants, a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, as so many in this country raised as children of immigrants, she developed a passion to serve and a patriotic love of country.

She is the first African-American woman nominee ever to be on a ticket. She is the first person of South Asian descent ever to be on a ticket. And in the year 2020, when we are commemorating the 100th anniversary of the amendment that guaranteed women the right to vote, I can think of no